JUSTICE FOR A BETTER ARIZONA

A Strategic Agenda for Arizona's Courts 2002 - 2005



Implement programs to insure the availability of qualified language interpreters for non-English speaking litigants

STATE OF ARIZONA

ACCESS TO THE COURTS

INTERPRETER NEED AND PRACTICE

STUDY and RECOMMENDATIONS 2001-2002

Prepared by: Arizona Minority Judges Caucus Interpreter Issues Committee

MJC Recommendations

- Formation of an Arizona Judiciary
 Interpreter Commission by the Arizona
 Supreme Court
- AJC Motion (March 2002 Meeting)
 - Form a commission to study the MJC recommendations
 - Funding
 - Legislative
 - Efficiency

Interpreter Issues

- Arizona is growing and becoming increasingly more diverse
 - 2000 Census Arizona's Hispanic population is about 1.3 million people
 - Other non-English speaking populations are growing as well

Census Data

Population %	<u>Arizona</u>	National
Anglo	77.9%	69.0%
Latino	25.3 %	12.5%
African American	3.5 %	12.1%
Asian/Pacific I.	2.6 %	3.6%
Native American	5.7 %	.7%



- The disparity of available and qualified interpreters across jurisdictions
- Standards, competency, qualifications
- Testing, registration & certification
- Rules of ethics
- Education & training
- Funding and administrative/staff needs
- Educating the judiciary, court staff and the bar
- Law and Rule Augmentation

Law and Rules

Title 28 USC

Requires that the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts establish an interpreter program "to facilitate the use of certified and otherwise qualified interpreters in judicial proceedings instituted by the United States."

Structure of Arizona Judicial Branch

- Jurisdictional issues arise
 - superior court
 - criminal law
 - probate, guardianships
 - mental health proceedings
 - civil actions
 - domestic relations
 - juvenile court
 - justice courts
 - municipal courts

Interpreter Issues

- Two distinct problems regarding interpreter services currently being provided
 - Immediate need for more interpreters
 - Need to develop a system or program to secure qualified, competent interpreters to meet the growing demand in Arizona courts

Issues

- Increasing the *relative number* of interpreters
- Maintaining quality
 - interpreter testing and certification
 - overall passing rate for certification less than 20%
 - certification will effectively decrease the number of court interpreters

Issues

- Fluency in foreign language
- Finding individuals with mental and verbal agility in interpreting modes
 - sight
 - consecutive
 - simultaneous

Program Essentials

- Adequate funds to support program
- Interpreter Policy Advisory Committee
- Educate advisory committee, judges and other personnel
- Adopt a code of professional responsibility
- Provide mandatory minimum training

Interpreter Proficiency

- Initiate mandatory written testing
 - code of professional conduct
 - court procedures
 - court and legal terminology

EDUCATION &TRAINING

- Schools and Associations
 - National Association of Judiciary
 Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT)
 - Phoenix College
 - Pima Community College Translation Certificate Program
 - UofA Agnese Haury Summer Institute for Court Interpreters

EDUCATION &TRAINING

- Schools and Associations
 - American Translator's Association (ATA)
 - Arizona Court Interpreter Association (ACIA)
 - Court Interpreter Training Program ASU
 - Consortium for State Court Interpreter Certifications (NCSC)

Consortium Certification Tests

- Spanish (4)
- Russian (2)
- Vietnamese
- Korean
- Hmong

- Polish
- Cantonese
- Laotian
- Haitian-Creole (2)
- Arabic

Interpreter Certification

- Language Coordinator
- Interim program to

rate interpreters according to skill level and maintain a list of "authorized" interpreters

Alternative

Provisional Interpreter Designation

- Development of a screening examination
- Testing and scoring of exams
- Intensive training program
 - Curriculum development

